



Department of Justice

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**ARMY TEST AND EVALUATION COMMAND AVIATION CHIEF AND
ENTERPRISE, ALABAMA-BASED PRIVATE CONTRACTOR CHARGED WITH
BRIBERY, HONEST SERVICES WIRE FRAUD, AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A federal grand jury in the Middle District of Alabama returned a five-count indictment charging Jeffrey H. Stayton, 55, and William Curtis Childree, 67, with two counts each of honest services fraud and one count each of bribery, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today. The grand jury in Montgomery, Alabama also charged Stayton with one count of obstruction of justice.

According to the indictment, Stayton was the Chief of the Aviation Division for the United States Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC), and Childree was the sole owner and operator of Maverick Aviation (Maverick), a business that is engaged in the purchase and distribution of helicopters for its clients.

In or about November 2001, the government selected Maverick to procure and modify two helicopters for use by the U.S. government. The contract was worth approximately \$4.7 million. Stayton allegedly took actions that favored Maverick's selection as the eventual contract recipient and misled government officials about Maverick's performance under the contract. The indictment alleges that in exchange for Stayton's actions, Childree secretly wired a third party \$61,071.75 from a Maverick bank account to satisfy the entire amount on a mortgage on Stayton's personal residence in Spotsylvania, Virginia. Stayton failed to disclose his solicitation or receipt of this payment either to other ATEC or Army personnel or in his financial disclosure statements.

The indictment further alleges that in or around June 2005, after the commencement of a grand jury investigation, Stayton appeared before the grand jury and falsely testified that Childree's \$61,071.75 payment was a loan.

A violation of the honest services and wire fraud statutes is punishable by a term of up to 20 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both; a violation of the bribery statute is punishable by up to 15 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both; and a violation of the obstruction statute is punishable by a maximum of 10 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Shaun M. Palmer and Matthew C. Solomon of the Public Integrity Section, headed by Andrew Lourie, Acting Chief. The case was investigated jointly by the Department of the Army, Criminal Investigation Division, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office.

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